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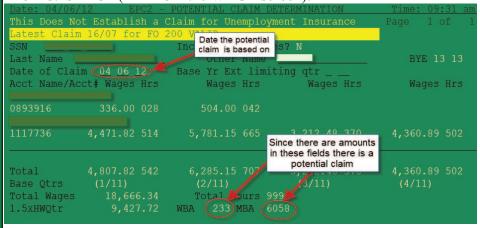SNAP Policy Analysts
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**For information about QC error trends and tips in SNAP, TANF& ERDC, as well as Program Management Evaluations, click here.**
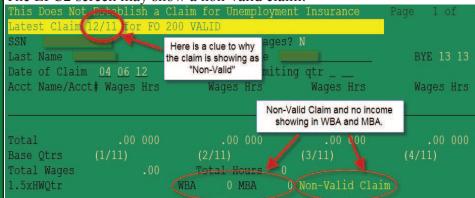
## How to determine a potential Oregon UC claim

To be eligible for TANF assistance, people must actively pursue assets for which they have a legal right to claim. Many times this means you must evaluate whether or not an individual has a potential claim. When determining if a customer has a UC asset to pursue, there are two places to look.

The first is EPC2 (F22 from the WAGE screen):



The EPC2 screen may show a non-valid claim:



If the EPC2 screen shows a non-valid claim then the next step is to look at the ECLM claim list (F5 from ECLM). Do any of the active claims have a future BYE date? If yes, this is a claim from which the customer may be able to start claiming benefits. Whether or not they are eligible for benefits from this claim will be determined based upon their job separation.



Don't forget to determine whether the customer has good cause not to pursue a claim. Either way, narrate your decision!

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# QC SNAP Errors Shelter and Utility Costs

Why do offices receive shelter and utility errors when proof of costs is not required?

QC has seen an increase in shelter and utility errors, some are agency caused and some are customer caused. Let's talk about those customer caused errors.

Most of the time customers do not mean to give us false information. They often didn't really understand the question on the application or how to correctly answer it. Having a discussion is the answer. This is why interviews and the "human touch" are so very important.

Sure the application tells customers to list "everyone in your household" but it isn't always reported correctly. How does your customer define household? During the beginning of the conversation you need to ask questions so you can determine who lives in the home, how are they related to each other, and who purchases and prepares food together? Once you know who lives in the home and who is part of the SNAP filing group, you will have a better understanding of what you need to ask about the shelter and utility costs.

The 415F was revised to ask the shelter and utility questions a little differently than in past versions. Will you get better answers? We hope so. Will some people still fill it out wrong? We expect some will.

So what are some of the common things QC is finding which result in errors?

- Full rent is $870/mo. Customer doesn't report others in the household and lists the rent as $870.00. QC finds there is a roommate who gives $435 to our customer each month. Our customer then gives the full $870 to the landlord. The agency allowed $870 but the correct rent to allow is $435.
- The customer reports rent is $795.00 and she lives alone. The landlord verified to QC the rent is $750 and there is an additional $45.00 monthly sewer charge. The agency allowed $795 but the correct rent to allow is $750. The $45 charge is part of the utility allowance.
- The customer reports living with a roommate and paying $450 per month plus phone and all the utilities are included. The roommate and the customer both state to QC the customer has to pay $300 every month for rent and $150 for all the utilities (which includes heat) except for his phone which he pays for himself. The agency allowed $450 shelter + $57 TUA = $507 total. The correct amount to allow was $300 shelter + $446 FUA =$746 total.
- The customer reports she pays $1000/mo rent plus all the utilities and her income is $1250/mo. QC discovers her mother rented the place for her. Her mother gives her a check every month for $700 made out to the landlord. The agency allowed $1000 shelter + $446 FUA. The correct amount was $300 shelter + $446 FUA.
- The customer reports rent is $595/mo with all utilities included. QC discovers the customer is on Section 8 and pays $73/mo. The agency allowed $595 but the correct amount to allow was $73. Field Staff may believe QC receives different information because QC verifies shelter and utilities where the office accepts the customer's statement. Sometimes that is true, but quite often it's the customer who informs QC what the real facts are. In all the above situations the customers thought they were answering the questions correctly, but we know they weren't.

It's all in the conversation!

*Quality Control*

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## Error Prevention Tip

**Scenario:** Customer submitted their Interim Change Report (ICR) but didn't submit all the information needed (missing pay verification). The eligibility worker correctly pended the case. Unfortunately, Quality Control had to cite an error because the ICR included a new address which was not processed, causing the pend notice to go to the old address.

**Tip**: Watch for changes of address on ICR's and update the record *before* sending a pend notice.

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## Didja Know???

Before imposing a sanction for a *new* instance of noncooperation with child support, contact the TANF client so you can determine good cause. Regardless of how you contact the client (phone, speedy note, DHS 210A), you are still required to send the DHS 7525 (Notice of Disqualification for Non-Cooperation with Child Support Enforcement) if you are going to impose a sanction.

# TIPS

Tips are part of earned income. They are defined as a sum of money given for a service over and above the payment that is due. Some examples of positions that typically earn tips are waitresses, hostesses, and baristas. Some folks whose positions would not immediately lead us to think of tips are restaurant hostess, cooks, bus persons and hotel/motel housekeepers.

As part of the eligibility interview, workers should be asking anyone working if they receive any other types of income like shift differential, bonuses, overtime or commissions in their normal line of conversation about earnings.

There is not an expectation to single out "service type industries", however if there is an indicator that the customer is or may receive tips workers should be addressing this as part of the normal line of conversation during an interview.

When conducting an eligibility interview it is good practice to ask any customer if they receive any types of other income such as bonuses, over time, commission, shift differential, tips etc.

Check the "Position title" on the 415F and 539A. This will help identify potential positions where tips or other types of income may be received. Are any of the "Other pay" boxes checked? All tools that will help you in identifying potential tips.

*SNAP Policy Analysts*

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# Important reminders for ERDC and TANF Transitions

A recent Secretary of State audit of child care payments identified two error trends in TANF and ERDC transitions.

**Income Verification**
Income from new employment must be verified when transitioning from TANF to ERDC. Income cannot be calculated based on the customer statement. Verification received must support the income calculation.

**Effective dates**
TANF-JOBS child care benefits cannot be effective prior to the date of eligibility for TANF. This means a zero copay child care billing cannot be approved when the family is not eligible for TANF. Contact policy if you need help with the effective dates for transitioning between programs:
CHILDCARE.POLICY@dhsoha.state.or.us
TANF.Policy@dhsoha.state.or.us

**Please review the policy transmittal** SS-PT-15-005 for more details, including examples and policy references.
*Child Care Policy Analysts, TANF Policy Analysts*

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# New Brochures for SNAP Customers

There are two new brochures for your SNAP customers. Both are available for ordering now through Publishing and Distribution and will be made available on the form server in the near future.

**DHS0848 - Your SNAP food benefits may increase by reporting your expenses.**
This explains the various deductions customers may be allowed.

**DHS0849 - Your SNAP food benefits may increase by claiming your medical expenses.**
This explains the medical deduction in more detail than the deductions brochure.

Both of these can be good reminders to customers to give us all the information necessary to determine the correct allotment. These can be made available in your lobby and interview rooms or given to customers during the application or recertification process. These are not required to be used but if you have any in-house created material for customers about deductions in general or medical deductions please recycle and replace them with these brochures.

These have been created in response to offices requesting them and with input from field staff. Staff in field offices can have a voice by sharing concerns and requests with your local representative on the Statewide Policy Workgroup.
*SNAP Policy Analysts*

# Ready for Redesign: SSP Training Redesign

This strategic planning process takes advantage of the current strengths of the SSP Training Unit, while providing the foundation for SSP Service Delivery changes. We will leverage education, skills, technology, innovation, and adult education methods to further develop the ability of our employees to accurately and efficiently serve their customers.

### *Things you need to know:*

The first training new staff will attend is a course called 'SSP Fundamentals'. This course will take the place of SSP Essentials and Computer Connections classroom training. SSP Fundamentals is being developed to provide a strong foundation for new SSP staff.

The first step in offering local training opportunities will be the creation of SSP Fundamentals Training Classrooms. SSP Fundamentals Training Classrooms will be located in the following areas:

| SSP Fundamentals Locations | Serving Primarily Districts: |
| --- | --- |
| La Grande | 12, 13 and 14 |
| White City | 8 and 11 |
| Bend | 10 and 14 |
| Eugene | 5, 6 and 7 |
| NE PDX | 2, 9 and 15 |
| Hillsboro | 1 and 16 |
| Salem - Winema | 3 and 4 |

How is this different than the way training is delivered today?

A new component added to SSP Fundamentals will be a structured on the job training (OJT) plan. Staff will attend classroom training for a week, then return to the branch the following week with a checklist and activities to complete prior to returning to training.

This new model creates the following opportunities:
- New staff will receive consistent messaging in the classroom and dedicated time to practice and apply new skills
- Training in cohorts strengthens the support of new staff
- Reduction of staff travel by use of regional classrooms
- New staff are enrolled timely into the correct CORE training sequence

CORE training will be offered at three locations simultaneously in Salem, Portland and Tigard. This will allow for new staff to complete training timelier, even while needing to travel for CORE classes during this transition period. As virtual training is developed and additional classrooms are established, travel will be greatly reduced. Virtual training will include e-learning (computer based training), webinars, video and "live streamed" training.

Frequent updates on Training Redesign will be provided as the project progresses. If you have questions regarding the SSP Training Redesign, send them to the project team by contacting the SSP Training email box at: SSP.training@ state.or.us.

# Upcoming Training Offered by the SSP Training Unit

Core Class offerings and begin dates:

| | |
| --- | --- |
| **Essentials** | 6/16 Tigard, 7/7 Salem, 7/28 Tigard, 8/11 Salem |
| **Computer Connections** | 6/2 Salem, 6/23 Tigard, 7/14 Portland, 8/4 Tigard |
| **Expedited SNAP** | 6/9 Portland, 7/28 Portland, 8/25 Salem |
| **SNAP Basics** | 6/2 Tigard, 6/16 Salem, 7/7 Tigard, 7/28 Salem, 8/25 Portland |
| **ERDC** | 6/2 Clackamas, 8/11 Tigard, 8/25 Salem |
| **TANF Eligibility** | 6/9 Clackamas, 7/28 Tigard |
| **TANF Case Management:** | 6/16 Tigard, 8/4 Salem |
| **DV Policy & Case Planning** | 6/18 Clackamas, 8/6 Tigard |
| **Services to Noncitizens** | 6/2 Portland, 7/14 Salem, 8/11 Tigard |

Look for Webcasts and other Online courses for:

**SNAP Civil Rights** – C04948: This course needs to be completed annually.

**SNAP NED Eligibility and Coding** – C03279,   **Job Participation Incentive (JPI)** – C04877

**SNAP Transitional Benefit Alternative (TBA)** – C04708

**Oregon Vital Event Registration (OVERS) Update Training** – C03682

# April 2015
## Targeted SNAP Reviews
### 100% Accuracy Honor Roll

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0111 | Baker City APD | 1311 | Burns APD | 1802 | Lakeview SSP |
| 0314 | Estacada APD | 1402 | New Market Theater SSP | 1811 | Klamath Falls APD |
| 0611 | North Bend APD | 1404 | Refugee Branch SSP | 2003 | Cottage Grove SSP |
| 0914 | Redmond APD | 1418 | SE Portland AAA | 2202 | Lebanon SSP |
| 1011 | Rosebug APD SSO | 1502 | South Valley SSP | 2311 | Ontario APD |
| 1211 | John Day APD | 1517 | Medford APD DSO | 3102 | Enterprise SSP |
| 1301 | Burns SSP | 1611 | Prineville APD | 3111 | La Grande APD |
| | | 1612 | Madras APD | | |

### 90% or Better

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 98.00 | Roseburg SSP | 1001 | 95.00 | Milton-Freewater SSP | 3004 | 91.67 | Grants Pass APD | 1717 |
| 98.00 | McMinnville SSP | 3601 | 95.00 | Hood River SSP | 3302 | 91.67 | Albany AAA | 2211 |
| 97.96 | North Salem SSP | 2402 | 95.00 | McMinnville AAA | 3617 | 91.67 | Beaverton APD | 3417 |
| 97.50 | Eugene AAA | 2011 | 94.92 | West Eugene SSP | 2002 | 90.58 | Metro Processing Ctr | 1403 |
| 96.67 | Springfield SSP | 1101 | 94.74 | Prineville SSP | 1601 | 90.38 | North Clackamas SSP | 0303 |
| 96.67 | Ontario SSP | 2301 | 94.59 | Tigard SSP | 3403 | 90.32 | Redmond SSP | 0902 |
| 96.55 | Woodburn SSP | 1901 | 94.12 | Grants Pass SSP | 1701 | 90.00 | Corvallis SSP | 0201 |
| 96.55 | Santiam Center | 2404 | 94.00 | Hillsboro SSP | 3402 | 90.00 | Astoria SSP | 0401 |
| 96.43 | La Grande SSP | 3101 | 93.33 | Warrenton AAA | 0411 | 90.00 | Gold Beach SSP | 0801 |
| 96.00 | South Salem SSP | 2401 | 93.33 | Woodburn AAA | 1911 | 90.00 | John Day SSP | 1201 |
| 96.00 | West Portland AAA | 2518 | 93.18 | Ptld Mid-Area AAA | 3515 | 90.00 | W Medford Proc Ctr | 1504 |
| 96.00 | East Multnomah AAA | 3518 | 92.86 | Gold Beach APD | 0811 | 90.00 | Toledo AAA | 2111 |
| 95.00 | Baker City SSP | 0101 | 92.45 | D8 Processing Center | 1503 | 90.00 | D4 Processing Center | 2203 |
| 95.00 | Cave Junction SSP | 1702 | 92.16 | Oregon City SSP | 0302 | 90.00 | Pendleton SSP | 3001 |
| 95.00 | McKenzie Center SSP | 2001 | 92.00 | NE Processing Center | 2803 | 90.00 | Florence AAA | 3211 |
| 95.00 | Dallas AAA | 2711 | | | | 90.00 | Wash Cnty Proc Ctr | 3404 |

### Child Support & Safety

When a TANF client has asked for good cause for noncooperation with child support, you have to review the need for good cause at each redetermination.

Remember: Coding an absent parent with good cause means that DCS will not establish paternity or pursue child support. Because some clients with a safety risk want to establish paternity and pursue child support, it is very important to let clients know there are other safety options that don't stop establishment of paternity and pursuit of child support. These are:

- Contact address.
- Claim of risk for nondisclosure of information.
- Address Confidentiality Program (ACP).

For more information on these safety options, go to FSM Child Support C.4 and see the April 2015 edition of the OnTarget newsletter.

*TANF Policy Analysts*